

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/684,477

Examiner

DANIEL G MARIAM

Applicant(s)

TAKAHASHI, EIJI

Art Unit

2621

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to a telephone interview dated October 18, 2004.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 16-24 and 39-47 (will be renumbered as 1-18).
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 15 October 2003 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 09/545,580.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☒ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date 10152003
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date 10182004.
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____.


DANIEL MIRIAM
PRIMARY EXAMINER

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT AND ALLOWANCE

Examiner's Amendment

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Michael G. Gilman (Reg. No. 19,114) on October 18, 2004.

The application has been amended as follows:

Amend claim 17 as follows:

At lines 4, delete the limitation "color" - -

Amend claim 18 as follows:

At lines 3, delete the limitation "color" - -

Amend claim 23 as follows:

At line 27, after the limitation "original" insert "color" - -

Amend claim 24 as follows:

At line 32, after the limitation "original" insert "color" - -

Amend claim 40 as follows:

At lines 4, delete the limitation "color" - -

Allowance

2. Claims 16-24, 39-47 are allowed. The claims will be renumbered as 1-18

3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The instant invention discloses an image recognition method and apparatus whereby processing to extract the shapes of objects which are to be recognized can be performed such as to eliminate the respective shapes of small objects that are not intended to be recognized, without distorting the shapes of the objects which are to be recognized. Upon acquisition of an original region image (or color image), the instant invention selectively determines respective regions of the original region image as constituting a set of small regions which are each to be subjected to a region combining operation, and selects one of the set of small regions as a next small region which is to be subjected to the region combining operation. After selecting one of the small regions, the instant invention then calculates a length of common boundary line with respect to the next small region for each of respective regions which are disposed immediately adjacent to the next small region, and determines one of the immediately adjacent regions which has a maximum value of said length of boundary line, and combines the next small region with the adjacent region having the maximum length of common boundary line. These features and in combination with all of the other elements of the claims are not disclosed or fairly suggested by any of the prior art of record.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to DANIEL G MARIAM whose telephone number is 703-305-4010. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (7:00-4:30) FIRST FRIDAY OFF.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, LEO BOUDREAU can be reached on 703-305-4607. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


DANIEL MARIAM
PRIMARY EXAMINER

October 18, 2004